

The campaigning newspaper that puts you in the picture

DN EXTRA

February 2005

Incapacity cash

Will benefit cuts
punish the
wrong people?

Big Brother

TV show calls for
disabled applicants

Parking puzzle

Schoolboy's mum has
nowhere to park



DN EXTRA...

Published by Scope

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Aeromino Ltd

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Benefit overhaul

Disabled people were left concerned and confused about changes to incapacity benefit (IB) as details were finally announced earlier this month.

The *DN* website received an unprecedented number of visits after the government announced it hoped to cut the number of claimants by one million.

Although reform is aimed at new claimants, one web visitor said that while he understood there were some benefit cheats "my main worry is about myself and others who are genuine. This has made me ill to the point where I no longer care if I live".

Under the new system (see box), Work and Pensions Secretary Alan Johnson (pictured) says new disabled people

asking for IB would be encouraged to seek work they can do rather than thinking they are permanently "incapable" of careers.

This would be backed, the government says, with improved employment advice including more Pathways to Work areas, improved occupational health and disability discrimination legislation.

The government has promised that the finances of those with "the most severe conditions" will be protected, but others will receive less cash unless they seek work and participate in job centre interviews and training. It also pledges to "ensure that existing claimants' positions are protected if they take a job" but that they "would be free to access" improved job



FUTURE IB – BY 2008

- New claimants on "holding benefit" of £55 a week
- New capability assessment and employment and support assessment
- Benefit renamed and split:
 - *Rehabilitation support allowance* – if you are told you have potential to return to work – must seek job and will be rewarded with more cash
 - *Disability and sickness allowance* – if you are told you cannot work – but encouraged to seek work "where possible" – higher amount than holding benefit

services and opportunities.

Tell us your views on our forum at www.disabilitynow.org.uk or contact sarah.hobson@scope.org.uk or tel: 020 7619 7324.

the extra effort isn't necessary?"

Big Brother executive producer Phil Edgar Jones said: "We never know exactly who we are looking for until we find them – but the first question you need to ask yourself is 'do I stand out in a crowd?' If you think you do, then come along."

If you audition, let us know what happened on 020 7619 7325 or elizabeth.choppin@scope.org.uk

WHERE TO AUDITION

February 12	Newcastle
16	Dublin
19	Manchester
23	Cardiff
26	Birmingham

March 5 & 6 London

To find out more go to <http://bigbrother.channel4.com>
For access needs, leave a message on 020 8222 4995.

Big Brother beckons

The creators of TV reality show *Big Brother* are calling on disabled people to audition for season six, but pressure is rising to ensure such applicants can be chosen.

Although the show's producers Endemol UK have found accessible audition venues, there are questions about people who would need a sign language interpreter or personal assistant in the house.

Alison Walsh, disability officer at Channel Four, said:



House proud: Would you stand out more than the 2004 crowd?

On the cover: Sixteen-year-old Janek Mela has become the world's youngest explorer to cross both the North and South poles. On his southern expedition, the amputee, who is Polish, and companions walked between 4 and 16 km each day, facing very high winds and temperatures as low as -30°. "There were moments I thought we wouldn't make it. Marching in Antarctica is no Sunday afternoon stroll, but we just kept on walking until we finally got there," he said.

Parking space demanded

The mother of a disabled schoolboy is demanding a long-term solution to parking problems at his school in Bristol.

Five-year-old Liam Walker, who is quadriplegic, needs to be dropped off close to the school entrance, but St Ann's Infants in Birmingham has no car park.

On occasion, Annie Walker told *DN*, she has been forced to park on zigzag lines outside, although it is "unethical and immoral and very dangerous" and has had angry parents leave letters on her windscreen.

Another solution has been to take Liam to school late and pick him up early, but these moves have made him feel "left out".

In the short term, Mrs Walker has been able to park in the playground while building work takes place but then, according to Bristol City



Council, cones should be left ten minutes outside school before arriving each day.

"I'm still very worried about what's going to happen . . . as Liam is going to be at this school for another five years."

She wants a permanent solution, such as a disabled parking bay. "I keep being fobbed off and passed around from one au-

thority to the next," she told *DN*.

A council spokesman said: "We are acting as quickly as we can to meet this parent and her child's particular needs. The council is exploring with the school the possibility of creating a permanent parking space outside the school and we are looking at this as a matter of urgency."

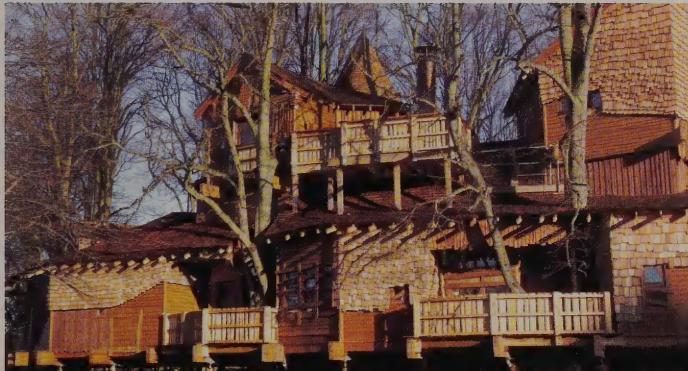
In brief

Direct payment desires

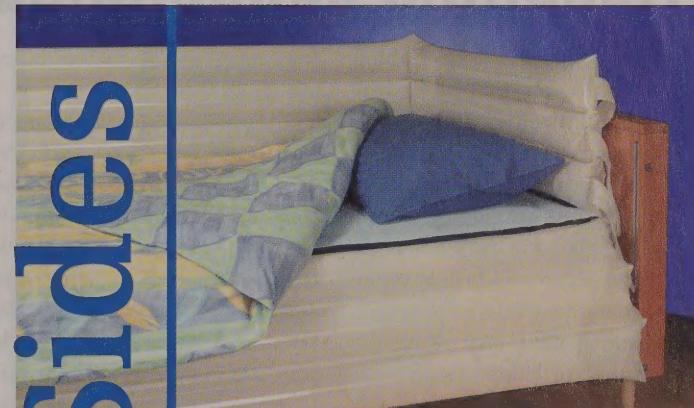
Campaigners have called for "flexible, patient-centred support" for people with learning difficulties using direct payments. Research by Values Into Action and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation criticised the lack of targeted, advice services and local authorities for reluctance to offer payments. www.via.org or 020 7729 5436.

Family support

Mencap will publish a study in March to call for a centre to support families of disabled children. Representatives, addressing a parliamentary group on disability, said the National Centre for Early Childhood Intervention would provide an information network for parents, training and research to help give children "the best start in life".



Top Trees: Eight-year-old Jessica Allan tests out "Europe's biggest treehouse", which has been planned with disabled children "at the heart" of design. With teacher Anne Mallen, the Barndale House School pupil explored the 4,000 sq ft structure that has opened at Alnwick Garden in Northumberland. www.alnwickgarden.com or 01665 511350.



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In the picture: Disabled artist Anita Chang has launched an online art agency for people like herself who have epilepsy or other neurological conditions. ArtBarter links businesses with the artists who can showcase their work and be commissioned. www.ArtBarter.co.uk

Hospitals condemned

A company plans to open three private hospitals for people with learning difficulties, despite serious government concerns.

Last year, Care Principles (CP) sparked outrage by applying for planning permission to build a secure, 54-bed hospital for young people with learning difficulties and mental health needs in Northamptonshire.

DN has now discovered CP also plans to extend a hospital in Staffordshire and build at least three more in England and Wales, to add to its five existing hospitals.

Campaigners said such institutions clash with the government's Valuing People white paper that said services should be community based.

The government aims to close all NHS long-stay hospitals for people with learning difficulties by April 2006.

Dr Jean Collins, director of Values Into Action, said she was "horrified" that people were again facing "the spectre of

long-term incarceration miles and miles from home".

Health Minister Dr Stephen Ladyman told DN he was "concerned and disturbed" at the trend for more private hospitals for people with learning difficulties and that local authorities were using their services. "We know that many of the people who are inpatients in such settings are many miles from their families and home, possibly without justification. It flies in the face of best practice."

The government has issued advice to NHS and social services bosses and is working with the Social Care Institute of Excellence, the National Institute of Clinical Excellence and the Healthcare Commission, which can refuse to register hospitals if they are "against best practice".

A CP spokesman said it worked with more than 50 primary care trusts and its hospitals were not "long stay institutions" but "aim to help patients move back into the community".

'A true pioneer'

With the death of Sir Peter Large, on 23 January at the age of 73, the disability movement lost one of its foremost advocates.

As a newly disabled person in 1961, and having had his career in the oil industry cut short, he rapidly became aware of both the inadequacy of support services and the way in which people like himself were generally written off.

But having contracted polio, Sir Peter's drive and massive intellect ensured change was in the offing.

He held Civil Service posts from 1966 to 1991 and was unstoppable in a vast range of voluntary activities.

After being appointed to the Joint Committee on Mobility for the Disabled, he was soon invited by Lord Alf Morris to help push the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act through Parliament.

He also gave secretarial support to the All-Party Disablment Group and worked with Lord Morris when he was Minister for Disabled People.

After playing a key role in the introduction of the mobility allowance, he was a founder governor of Motability.

As parliamentary spokesman

for the Disablment Income Group and chair of the Association of Disabled Professionals his influence behind the scenes was profound, and his trenchant criticism a constant challenge. But his passion for human rights was always underpinned by rationality, a quality in somewhat shorter supply today.

Perhaps his most lasting memorials are the reports in 1979 and 1982 of two committees he chaired, one that called for access to transport and the built environment and the other that urged legislation to combat discrimination. Although the anti-discrimination legislation Sir Peter called for was a long time coming in this country, his was the hand that laid its foundation stone.

This truly great pioneer was still working to improve the quality of life for disabled people right to the end. He leaves his wife Sheenah, who was his constant and devoted supporter through his later years.

Derek Kinrade

DN interviewed Sir Peter shortly before he died. See profile in February DN or at www.disabilitynow.org.uk

In brief

Mental health bill guide

Mental health charity Maca has produced a plain English guide* to the draft Mental Health Bill, so service users and carers can help ensure rights are protected. A spokesman said: "We hope that our easy-read briefing on the government's plans will encourage people to join with us in campaigning for human rights and appropriate consensual treatment to be at the heart of mental health law reform." *Treatment not Mistreatment*, www.maca.org.uk or 020 7061 3400

Bournewood advice

The Department of Health has introduced interim guidance after a European court ruled that an autistic man's human rights were infringed by Bournewood Community and Mental Health NHS Trust. It detained him for four months against his carers' wishes. The document* explains how human rights can be protected.

* *The HL v UK (Bournewood) – Interim Advice*, www.dh.gov.uk

Sport cash fear

Plans to target funding at successful sports people only will damage prospects for future Paralympians, representatives have said.

Concerns have been raised after UK Sport, which gives out national lottery cash and other funds, launched a plan to secure an increased number of medals at the next games in Beijing for both disabled and non-disabled participants.

The organisation's statement said: "The strategy will ensure that funding is targeted at those athletes who have a realistic chance of making the podium in 2008, with more resources being available to fewer athletes."

A UK Sport spokesman rejected criticism, telling *DN*: "We want to simply work with

medallists at the top end and get value for money. These events are unashamedly about winning medals."

But Gordon Neale, chief executive of Disability Sport England, hit out at the move. "I think it's disgusting. If we get the games in 2012 we won't even have any athletes to put out there to compete."

"How they can say we are not going to give you money unless you get gold is a real kick in the teeth for all those athletes who are giving their best out there," he said.

Caroline Searle, of the British Paralympic Association, was less surprised. She suggested the Paralympics was always losing out. "It's no change for us, the funding has always been performance related."



HUGH STEWART

Cold competitor: Tom Killin helps Great Britain secure a place in the 2006 Winter Paralympics as Scotland's wheelchair curling team defends its World Wheelchair Curling title. The team's continuing success means that all GB teams are guaranteed a place in Turin.

Phil Lane, chief executive of the British Paralympic Association, said: "This is a fantastic achievement. It also means we have a realistic medal prospect in Turin and an opportunity to build on our success in Athens last year."



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Cruise across the continent

As part of *DN*'s continuing holiday series, Daniel Rhind describes how cruising can provide an easy-to-navigate trip for travellers who have visual impairments



I am severely visually impaired so I understand many of the problems faced by disabled people when going on holiday; travelling can be a daunting prospect.

In my case, by the time I have memorised the layout of a holiday destination, it is time to leave and a well-earned vacation can be far from relaxing.

Despite brochures and travel agents claiming their holiday destinations are fully accessible, it is not until you actually get there that you can determine the truth. It is often wiser to rely on recommendations from friends and family when selecting trips away.

After trying holiday resorts, villas and hotels, I thought I would try something a little different last year. Following much deliberation and discussion, family members booked a Mediterranean cruise.

After a taxi, flight and coach ride we embarked on the Sun Bird at Palma, Majorca. After seeing the ship for the first time, we questioned how the monster could even float. Weighing in at 37,584 tonnes, measuring 703 feet in length, and with 11 passenger decks, it really is a hotel on water.

The luggage was waiting for us outside our cabins. This had last been seen at Birmingham

airport, meaning the usual scramble for suitcases after arrivals was avoided.

One advantage of the trip was that the layout of the ship was relatively easy to learn. It was not long before I knew my way around, which made me feel comfortable and independent.

Cruising really suited my needs as a visually impaired person. The staff were very helpful. Nothing was too much trouble for them, and given there were 540 of them, there was always someone close at hand. The bar staff continually walked the ship bringing drinks and the waiter service at meal times made you feel as though you were the only guests on the ship, despite the fact that there were 1,595. Staff were quick to ensure that my disability did not detract in any way from my enjoyment of the holiday.

Those that ran the guided excursions were just as helpful. Our guided tour of Florence was well organised and verbal descriptions of the sites given by the guides helped to give detail to the blurred history and beauty that surrounded us.

In one week, the ship sailed to Tunis, Rome, Florence, Monte Carlo and Barcelona. We cruised overnight and docked each morning. This meant that each day when we



woke we had a new place to explore. Not that you had to explore – you could take advantage of the excursions or, if you were feeling a little lazier, you could wander around the dock or simply stay on deck and top up the tan. The evenings started with a five-course meal before moving into the lounge for the onboard entertainment.

Despite the positives, there were some negatives. Although there were lifts on board, they did not go as far as the top decks where the pools and sunbathing areas were. In order to access these decks in a wheelchair, a person would need to be carried up one flight of stairs.

Another problem – however unavoidable – were the crowds of people in Rome. We decided to see the city without a guide, a

decision that, with hindsight, may have been a mistake. The combination of the traffic and heat, along with the stress of trying to find our way around the city, became quite scary. However, this did not detract from the awesome experience of standing in the Coliseum, wishing at the Trevi Fountain and marvelling at the sight that is St Peter's Cathedral.

The final downside of the holiday was that, sadly, it had to end. That said, I am already planning this year's cruise – around the Greek Islands this time.

This cruise was booked through Going Places and My Travel. It cost approximately £750 per person per week (including an unlimited drinks card).

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For further information or an informal chat please contact Fay Heatley, IT Operations Manager, on 020 7601 2282.

For an application pack please email BM.CS@city-of-london.police.uk or call Jen Brewster on 020 7601 2734, quoting reference HDTL/CS.

Closing Date: **Wednesday 23rd February 2005**.

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You will also be responsible for co-ordinating the backup strategy for either Microsoft Server or Oracle database enterprises whilst both roles will act as central liaison for all software, hardware and data communications maintenance.

The successful candidates must have either Oracle Database Administrator experience or Microsoft Server (Windows 2000 with Active Directory and NT4). You will have five years previous IT support experience and a sound understanding of networking (LAN/WAN, TCP/IP and Internet). Experience of Veritas Netbackup, Sun Solaris 8, Microsoft Exchange Server (5.5 or 2000), Microsoft SMS and understanding of ITIL processes for Service Management is desirable.

For further information about the posts or an informal chat please contact Paul Gunnell, IT Operations Support Team Leader, on 0207 601 2996.

For an application pack please email BM.CS@city-of-london.police.uk or call Jen Brewster on 020 7601 2734, quoting reference FSA/CS.

Closing date: **Wednesday 23rd February 2005**

Please note that CVs will not be accepted.

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FIAT SCUDO COMBI, black, 02 reg, air con, electric windows. Tax May 05, still under warranty, 5 seats plus wheelchair via rear ramp. Very versatile, only one owner from new, £11,500 ono. Tel: 01635 862174 or mob: 07721 404914.

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Disability Now March

2005 published 26

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Small hotel owned and run by English family. Home from home. Happy and friendly. Home cooked food. Diets catered for. All bedrooms en-suite. Our own swimming pool and grass bowling green. Golfing bookings can be made. We are fully equipped for wheelchair users, their families and friends. Met at Faro airport. For brochures and flights with A.T.O.L. agents, tel: 00 351 289 396589, fax: 00 351 289 394924.

10 MINUTES FROM DISNEYLAND

Florida villa owned by paraplegic. Sleeps up to 12, fully accessible and large. King size bed with ensuite bathroom, wc and wheel-in shower. Large pool with water operated seat for a disabled person. A holiday you can take with confidence. Contact John Gillett on: 01805 601147.



BIRKDALE PAEDIATRIC & ADULT NEURO CLINIC

PHYSIOTHERAPY

Treatment programmes combining therapy and play for babies, children and adolescents with Cerebral palsy, Down Syndrome, stroke, head injury, Tumour, Dyspraxia, Low tone and slow development.

Tel / Fax: 020 8998 9403.

website: www.neuro-physio.co.uk

FILM AND TELEVISION APPRENTICESHIP-STYLE TRAINING

FT2's 2005 recruitment has opened for people wishing to establish freelance careers in junior technical, production and craft grades in film and television. This is paid apprenticeship-style training. Application packs for training to become an art department assistant, assistant editor, camera assistant, makeup/hair assistant, production assistant, props, researcher, set carpenter, set painter, set plasterer, sound assistant or wardrobe assistant are available from www.ft2.org.uk/recruit or by sending an A4 sae clearly marked with the job, e.g. "props", to FT2, 4th Floor, Warwick House, 9 Warwick Street, London W1B 5LY.

FT2 particularly welcomes applications from women, people from ethnic minority backgrounds and people with disabilities who are currently under-represented in the film and television industry.



ft²
FILM & TELEVISION
FREELANCE TRAINING

skillset

UK FILM COUNCIL
LOTTERY FUNDED

Support for disabled people

If you have a disability or health condition that affects your chances of finding or keeping a job, ask to see a Disability Employment Adviser, based in your local Jobcentre Plus office or Jobcentre.

They can provide:

- help with finding and keeping a job
- information on training
- support with benefit entitlement and programmes like New Deal, and
- advice on employing people with disabilities.



Contact your local Jobcentre Plus Office or Jobcentre for further information.

www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

jobcentreplus

Including Jobcentres and social security offices

Where does it say 'disabled' on your degree?

It doesn't. It says you've achieved.

Whatever your degree, background or aspirations, Fast-Track could have a role for you. Run by Scope as part of the Diversity Works programme and several leading UK employers, this 12-month development programme will give you a fantastic opportunity to underpin your future success. If you are a disabled person of graduate ability, contact us now for a September start.

Closing date: 14 March 2005

Salary of £15,000–18,000 per annum (plus London Weighting as applicable)

Contact: Fast-Track, 6 Market Road, London, N7 9PW

Tel: 020 7619 7299 **Fax:** 020 7619 7399 **Minicom:** 020 7619 7187

Web: <http://fast-track.scope.org.uk> **Email:** fast-track@scope.org.uk

Application pack available in alternative formats.

FAST ▶ TRACK



scope

Scope is a Registered Charity

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Disability Employment Strategy

Providing job opportunities for you

In Tower Hamlets we have an ambitious equalities agenda and aim to achieve the highest level of the equality standard for local government by March 2005. To build on our success in working towards a workforce which reflects our community we have introduced a Disability Employment Strategy.

Our strategy aims to increase the number of disabled people we employ and demonstrate that we are an employer of choice for disabled people.

All of our vacancies are advertised on our website: www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

We are working in partnership with other organisations based in our community. Skillsmatch, our job brokerage team, provide services to help local job seekers find employment. They can put local disabled people in touch with our community partners to help them improve their skills and find employment. You can contact Skillsmatch on 020 7364 3727 or e-mail andre.burwood@towerhamlets.gov.uk

If you would like to find out more about our Disability Employment Strategy please contact Mark Keeble, Principal Human Resources Officer on 020 7364 4789.



2004-2005
Supporting Social Care Workers
2003-2004
Community Cohesion

POSITIVE ABOUT
DISABLED PEOPLE



TOWER HAMLETS

• Wheelchairs/scooters

NEW CHILD'S MARSHALL Mk4 growing chair, adjusts 9 – 15 ins wide, 9–15 ins length, also adjustable foot and back rest with push handles and hideaway brakes, plastic side bars and solid 20 inch tyres, metallic red paint. £800 ono. Tel: 0151 2817334 or mob: 07861651690.

INVACARE SPECTRA PLUS powerchair – suitable for indoor and outdoor use and fully adjustable up to 18 stone. Extras incl tension adjustable upholstery, electric tilt in space, detachable headrest, dual control and puncture proof rear tyres. Cost over £3,000, hardly used, £795. Tel 01725 510376 (Hants).

FLEXMOBIL POWERED CHAIR with electric seat lift, single plate footrest, battery charger, unused, genuine reason for sale, will accept £1,900 ono for quick sale, will deliver. Tel anytime: 01970 871409.

Linage styles

EXAMPLE OF standard linage advert. Cost: £9 per line. Tick box below.

EXAMPLE OF

semi-display linage advert. Cost: £9 per line plus £10. Tick box below.

EXAMPLE OF

box linage advert. Cost: £9 per line plus £20. Tick box below.

- Standard linage advert
- Semi-display linage advert
- Box linage advert

charge or other
or persons not
ced or affected
for payment

We won't let the small print become a big problem.

Financial Services Consumer Panel – New Members

£9,000 per annum based on a minimum of 25 days per year + expenses

It's not every day you get the chance to help shape the future of financial services regulation. But as a member of the Financial Services Consumer Panel, you'll be doing just that as you represent and protect the interests of UK consumers.

Set up by, but independent of, the FSA, the Panel helps protect consumers against bad practice, misleading information and poor financial products and services. As a member of the Panel, you will play a key role in the overall effectiveness of their work as you provide advice to the FSA, review performance and inform policy and practices.

Direct financial services experience is not essential, but you will need enough knowledge of the sector to provide a robust contribution to the Panel and its embodiment of consumer interests. You'll also need an ability to assimilate large amounts of complex regulatory information and the capacity to analyse key policies from a consumer perspective. You should also be incisive, have total integrity and good communication skills.

This is a unique opportunity to be part of a high-profile body, and make a real difference to the financial issues facing the UK consumer.

To apply please visit www.fsa.gov.uk/jobs and search under job reference 23137.

We are keen that the Panel reflects the cultural diversity of the UK consumers we represent and welcome applications regardless of gender, race, disability or sexuality.

another unique insight through the financial services authority



DN Classified lineage advertisements

Please use this form if you are a private individual and want to place a classified advertisement (not Personal adverts). Write clearly in block capitals. Remember to allow a space between words. Use each space in the line even if you have to split words at the end.

Choose an advert style from far right. Send this coupon with your name, address, daytime telephone number and a cheque for the total made payable to Disability Now to: 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW.

Continue on a separate sheet if necessary

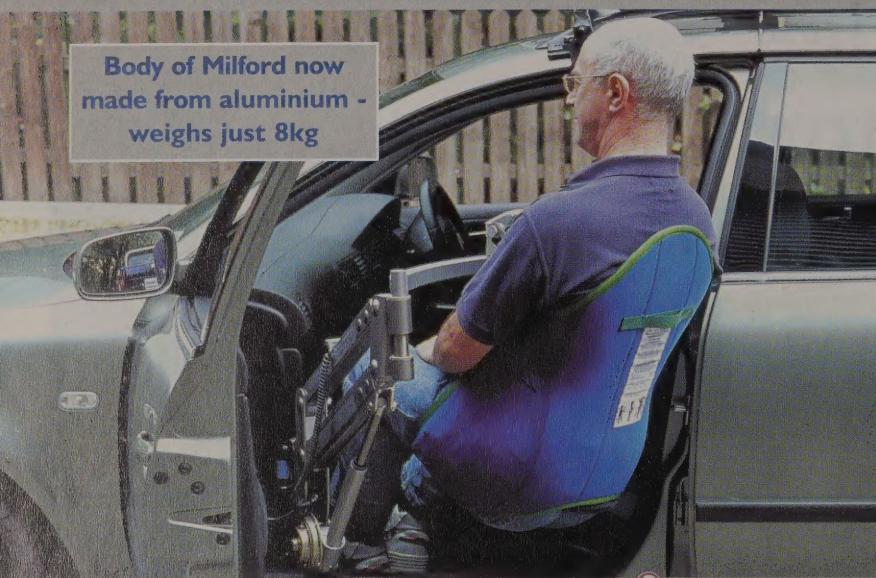
Standard lineage advert.
Cost: £9 per line.

DN reserves the right to edit advertisements if necessary. Completion of this form does not guarantee inclusion in a particular issue. Sorry no refunds. DN is a non-profit making newspaper.

The Milford Electric Person Lift

The simplest way to be lifted from your wheelchair into a vehicle

Body of Milford now
made from aluminium -
weighs just 8kg



- Fits all 2 and 3 door and most 4 and 5 door vehicles including estates, people carriers and 4x4s.
- Power is supplied by the car's 12 volt battery.
- Three sling sizes are available, with a 4-point connection for comfort and safety. Special slings also available. All slings fit around seated person. No need to lift person to fit sling.
- Lifts up to 17.5 stones (110 kgs).
- The lift mounting post is the only fixture to your vehicle and is simple to install.
- Simple to transfer to your next car, leaving your existing vehicle in its original condition.

EASYLOADER

Wheelchair Loading System



AUTOCHAIR LITE just 40kg.

Automatic Wheelchair Carrier
Folds, lifts & stores manual wheelchairs



The lightest fully-enclosed automatic rooftop wheelchair carrier in the world. With an aluminium and carbon fibre construction, it is light enough to fit even the smallest cars.

CARONY

Wheelchair into Vehicle System



MINIHOIST

Wheelchair, Electric Wheelchair
and Electric Scooter Lifts



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